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by Sidney Lens

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

POLITICAL METEOROLOGY

NOT ONE but two little clouds, and both already a good deal bigger than a man's hand, have appeared on the 1960 political horizon. One of these clouds indicates the renewal of Adlai Stevenson's claim to serious consideration as the Democratic candidate. The other, too small as yet to be immediately significant but too large to be ignored, represents the movement to "draft" Nelson Rockefeller as the Republican nominee.

Adlai Stevenson has never been counted out of the running altogether for a third nomination; there was and is too much sentiment for him among influential liberal Democratic groups. But the open lack of enthusiasm on the part of Democratic regulars for a "two-time loser," Stevenson's own silence (until very recently) and the excitement of Senator Kennedy's determined campaigning have combined to make the Stevenson cause seem more than a bit forlorn.

Now all this has changed, and in the space of a few short weeks. Part of the change is due simply to the fact that Mr. Stevenson is home—in what may have been and certainly will be counted as masterly political timing—from his nine-week tour of Latin America. He has been firmly and expectedly ambiguous about his interest in the Democratic Presidential nomination, but there seems to be wide agreement that he looks and acts like a candidate. His first formal address, at the University of Virginia, turned out to be an aggressive attack on the Eisenhower Administration and convinced most observers that he was actively in the running. In addition, the intelligence and knowledgeability which marked this address were sufficient to rekindle the ardor of many who still cherish the hope of seeing him in the White House.

More important than the loyalty of his devoted followers, however, were some other developments in the Democratic situation. In '52 and '56, after all, the devotion of his supporters was not enough to elect Mr. Stevenson over the magic name of Dwight D. Eisenhower. In 1960, with the Eisenhower name removed from the ballot and the scent of victory tantalizing their nostrils, the old pros of the Democratic organization are interested in a candidate who will win votes, not just the admiration of the eggheads. If the Democratic convention turns to the twice-defeated Stevenson, it seems clear, it will be because the delegates feel no other choice is possible.

Rather than anything Mr. Stevenson does or says, then, his chances for nomination depend on what happens in the race being run by the other candidates.

THE argument of the Stevenson supporters is this: if Kennedy does well in West Virginia, which is unlikely but not impossible, he will admittedly be hard to stop; but if he is defeated in West Virginia, they say, it will in some measure at least be ascribed to the operation of religious bigotry, and this unfortunate fact will taint the candidacy of all those who "stopped" him, innocent of bigotry though they may be.

Proponents of this view suggest that the Democrats might well choose to avoid a collision with the religious issue. But to pass over Kennedy in favor of the "active" Democratic candidates, these analysts point out, would still lay the party open to the charge of religious discrimination and the loss of a disgruntled "Catholic vote." The situation might be saved if Kennedy would accept the Vice Presidential nomination with any of these men, but in the first place he almost certainly would not and in the second place the charge of religious discrimina-

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tion would remain as alive and as fatal as ever. If this dilemma does come about, and Stevenson's supporters say it is probable, Senator Kennedy can yield to one man only on grounds not patently "religious," on grounds of prestige and performance acceptable to him and his followers—and that man is Adlai Stevenson.

The "draft Rockefeller" movement, too, is still highly speculative, but both ideas hang in the air insistently. There are a great many if's intervening, to be sure, but a Stevenson-Rockefeller contest cannot be completely ruled out of next November's possibilities.

SPACE PROGRESS

IF THERE is something heartening about the variety of new space mechanisms which the United States has been firing off into the atmosphere in recent weeks, concern persists that we have put into orbit nothing comparable in size to the larger Soviet satellites. Can it be that the secret of developing sufficient thrust still eludes our scientists? Preparations for the Astronauts continue on the assumption of our capability to launch large space vehicles. One of these men has just completed a full week in a sealed capsule patterned after the nose cone of an Atlas I.C.B.M.

Even with the lack of reported progress in the matter of thrust and of news as to what the Russian space scientists themselves have been doing lately, the most recent American achievements do have a highly gratifying effect. Besides the Pioneer V, which radioed back from millions of miles out in space, there are the more recent Tiros I and Transit IB. The first of these is a weather-forecasting satellite which has sent back some remarkable photographs of cloud formations taken at a distance of nearly five hundred miles.

The orbit of Transit IB, which was launched twelve days later, was closer to the earth than planned. Its flight varies between 233 and 479 miles in altitude. It is to be the first of four satellites circling the earth in aid of navigation along courses that are evenly spaced. Unlike present solar, stellar and radio guidance systems for ships and planes, the Transit method will be impervious to bad weather. It can cut in half the possible margin of error in determining a ship's position. This would bring that margin down to a quarter-mile, while some experts believe that this might actually be reduced to a tenth of a mile.

Such a succession of achievements shows that

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our space scientists are far from idle; they are recouping some of America's lost prestige. At the same time their latest accomplishments do but heighten the urgency for a self-policing agreement on nuclear weapons controls.

POLITICS IN ITALY

THE FUNCTION of the editorialist is to editorialize, but at this point sympathy rather than advice seems to be all one can offer the crisis-ridden Christian Democrats in Italy.

When all is said and done, in discussing the Italian political situation one always comes back to the Communists and their far-left allies. Between them, these two groups command the support of more than one out of three of Italy's voters. Subtract ten per cent of the electorate who vote for monarchist and neo-fascist parties on the right, and the political situation permits little room for maneuver by the Christian Democrats, who represent a fantastic assortment of liberals and conservatives, radicals and reactionaries, united generally in their Catholicism and in their opposition to a Marxist regime but always finding it difficult to agree on a party program.

Half a dozen Christian Democratic premiers have come and gone in as many years, and in recent weeks the regime has been going through another severe crisis. Efforts to form a government with neo-fascist support have already failed because many Christian Democratic leaders refused to serve in a government based on such a coalition. At this writing Amintore Fanfani, the well-known economist and social theoretician who currently leads the "more liberal" group, is trying to form a government by seeking the support of Pietro Nenni, the Socialist leader who normally cooperates with the Communists but who, it is hoped, might be ready to break this alliance.

Support from Socialist Nenni for Christian Democrat Fanfani would mean the accomplishment of the often heralded "opening to the left," and this prospect is bringing Signor Fanfani under heavy attack, from fellow-Christian Democrats, from *L'Osservatore Romano,* and, significantly, from the president of the potent Catholic Action organization of Italy. "Vatican officials" are said to be urging Signor Fanfani against accepting Nenni support, although so far he has turned a deaf ear to such pleas.

For those not on the scene, it would be easy enough to express a certain amount of uneasiness at such "official" Catholic involvement in a political question of this nature and let it go at that. Many who are on the scene, however, insist that this is part of the price that has to be paid for the highly precarious political alignment that is the major fact about present-day Italian politics. In a situation like that in Italy, they argue, where the Communists and their allies are always waiting in the wings, there is no margin for error. If one of the drawbacks to this situation is that the Vatican is necessarily more concerned with Italian politics than is theoretically desirable, there is, they say, no help for this.

The Italian critics of Amintore Fanfani's efforts fear that his approach to Signor Nenni and the Socialists will increase the prestige of the Marxist left not only nationally but on the municipal level, and this is an important factor. The Marxists have been gaining in the cities for some months; a national-level alliance between Christian Democrats and Socialists might speed this process, and it is said that Vatican officials fear that this could spread even to the municipal government of Rome itself. This would not, in 1960, put Pope John XXIII in quite the same position as that of Pius IX when he had to face the intransigence of the Italian revolutionaries of his day, but in dark moments the situation must at least seem comparable to Vatican officials. Fear that the Vatican could become an island in a Marxist sea in turn leads to pressure on Christian Democratic leaders—which may help in the short run but which only complicates the long-range problem, because pinning the "clerical party" label on the Christian Democrats could win the Marxists even further support at the polls.

All in all, the problem that the Christian Democrats face is obviously a major one. They may and probably will get through the current crisis, after which things will proceed more or less on an even keel for another unspecified period. But the long-range prospects are not good, and we know of no one who has suggested a really workable solution.

KOREAN DISORDERS

THERE ARE several reasons why South Korea has long been one of the chief recipients of American aid. It was on Korean soil that the free world—and the U.N.—took a stand against further territorial aggression by the Communists. In the war that resulted, much of Korea was ravaged and battered. South Korea had to harbor millions of North Korean refugees. Separation from North Korea was a great blow to the South Korean econ-

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omy. Finally, in violation of the peace treaty, North Korea has heavily rearmed.

South Korea, then, continues in a way to be a ward of the United Nations; it has a special relationship with the United States. All this does not mean that we have reason to expect that hard-pressed country to be a full-fledged political democracy of the Anglo-Saxon type. The veteran patriot, Syngman Rhee, its perennial President, is too much of an authoritarian for that. But in this cold-war world there should be some limits. Popular resentment over the announced results of the March 15 election is widespread. The fact that fifteen hundred heavily armed police have had to be brought in to keep order in Masan, a city of one hundred and fifty thousand, shows the extent of popular disaffection. Mr. Rhee was unopposed in the election, but the conviction that the defeat of his opposition-party Vice President, Dr. John M. Chang, was rigged appears to be too widespread and vehement to be ignored.

ON READING MODERN POETRY

FOR MANY years modern poetry has been criticized for being obscure, unintelligible, arcane, academic. The terms may vary slightly but the complaint has been the same; modern poems are too difficult to be readily understood by any but a small, highly trained group of readers. Now, it would appear, the situation is quite different. Some poems, at least, are easily understood, even by those who devote little of their time to poetry. As is frequently the case, however, appearances are deceptive: poems still cause trouble.

The most recent poetic fracas developed when an instructor in a State University College in Long Island assigned to his class one of Lawrence Ferlinghetti's poems, "A Coney Island of the Mind: #5." It was not long before the poem, which concerns the crucifixion of Christ, was labeled "cheap, tawdry, insolent and blasphemous" by Representative Steven Derounian (R.-N.Y.). Mr. Derounian, who said the poem was "the most obvious desecration of religion I've ever seen," called for a full-scale official investigation.

Evidently secure in his judgment of the poem, Mr. Derounian scented more than mere chance or poor judgment on the part of the instructor. "If there is a concentrated and planned effort to destroy Christian belief under the guise of education," he declared, "we should know it so immediate corrective action can be taken." Many people who agreed with this sentiment thought that it rested too heavily upon that terrible "if." Not only did they fail to understand how one poem could be evidence of "a concentrated and planned effort," but they disagreed about the merits and intention of the particular poem.

Mr. Merrill Rodin, the instructor who assigned the poem, said that "I myself feel that the poem is deeply spiritual and I am distressed to learn that persons of strong religious commitment could experience this poem . . . as blasphemous." Mr. Ferlinghetti said that "my intent was not blasphemous. . . . What I was saying in the poem is that the way the world acts today, you'd think Christ was dead. It's a criticism of the world, not Christ."

On the basis of the poet's declared intention and of the instructor's experience of the poem, there would seem, thus, to be little basis for Mr. Derounian's zealous indignation. It is possible, of course, for a poet to fail in his intention and for even an informed and sensitive reader of poetry to make poor or faulty appraisals of a particular poem. But it is easier for the reader untrained in a particular poetic idiom or form to mistake the intention of the poem, to make the faulty judgment. And in Mr. Ferlinghetti's poem there is strong temptation for such a reader. Many people who find beat terms such as "cool," "hep," "cat" repellent will find them particularly unpleasant when they are applied to Christ.

Any issues of academic freedom here will likely be decided in favor of the teacher and the poem. But there are other no less serious issues which may be loosely grouped under the heading "On Teaching the Appreciation of Poetry." In an essay with exactly that title, T. S. Eliot writes in the current *Critic:* "That rough and ready valuation, ordinarily called 'the verdict of history,' has not yet been passed, [on today's poetry], and the teacher must follow his own judgment as to what poets, and what poems, he should choose for initiating his pupils into the delights of poetry. But opinion about the relative importance of living poets can vary widely, even among persons of taste." He says further that "I think the choice of poems to present to a class should represent the taste of the teacher, not be set by a board."

It may seem unsporting, in a discussion of poetry, to pit Mr. Eliot against Mr. Derounian. Neither is likely to appreciate it. Nevertheless, Mr. Eliot's words seem pertinent to the Long Island fracas and they do point to central issues in the teaching of contemporary poetry.

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A Shorter Work Week?

Our lopsided society has a genuine genius for technology equalled only by its blindness in utilizing its benefits

by SIDNEY LENS

THE WOBBLIES, whose insurgent impulse a few decades ago made life in America a bit richer, placed high on their revolutionary banner the demand for a sixteen-hour work week—four hours, four days. America is still some distance from this inviting objective, but we have the word of Vice President Nixon that the five-day, thirty-hour week is now within our reach. Tabulating the virtues of free enterprise, Mr. Nixon sees this development as an inevitable outcome of improved technology.

Undoubtedly it is. Undoubtedly too, if we live long enough, even the Wobbly objective will approach reality. Our lopsided society has a genius for technology equalled only by its blindness in utilizing its benefits.

The question, however, is do we really want a shorter work week? Assuming that Walter Reuther and David McDonald, who slowed the pace by yielding this point in their 1958 and 1959 negotiations, pick it up again in 1961 or 1962—are we better off with thirty-five or thirty hours of work than with forty? Is it a shorter work week we really need, or a more fruitful work week?

Just posing the question may sound like rank heresy —particularly from a trade unionist. But this is probably as good a time as any to take a more penetrating look at the whole question of work and leisure. Is leisure itself an absolute virtue? Is work itself an absolute bane? Or is it the present kind of leisure, the present kind of work?

In our established value system, work is a commodity which the worker sells his boss for a week, day, hour, minute, or second. The less of the commodity he gives for the price (wage) the better off he feels he is—this is the traditional philosophy of the marketplace. If he can receive the same payment for thirty hours as he now receives for forty hours he considers it good trading. And undoubtedly it is.

Mr. Lens is a long-time trade-unionist who writes frequently on social and economic questions.

What is more, in purely economic terms a shorter work week is a historical necessity. In the uncharted decade we are about to enter the labor force is expected to rise by sixteen per cent. Productivity, however, will zoom ahead by two and a half times that much. Assuming that real living standards go up one or at most two per cent a year, that would still leave millions unemployed. In an era of welfarism and controlled capitalism neither the unions nor the government—each for different reasons—could tolerate such a prospect. They must act and act decisively.

IT IS significant that almost everyone today concedes the long term certainty of a further cut in working hours. Seventy years ago, when a new and weak A. F. of L. was mounting the struggle for the eight-hour day, the Illinois *State Register* called it the "most consummate piece of humbuggery ever suggested in connection with the "labor question." The staid New York *Times* insisted that "strikes to enforce the demand for eight-hours work a day may do much to paralyze industry, depress business, and check the reviving prosperity of the country, but they cannot succeed." Today, however, with a labor movement eighteen million strong, everyone knows that a shorter work schedule is inevitable. If we are to have economic stability in an era of automation we must also have a shorter work week.

The real issue, however, is whether less work will mean a happier worker. What will the workingman do with the eight or ten hours a week additional leisure? Will it help make him a more rounded, socially-oriented human being or will it cater to the child-like desire for more escapist pleasures?

Management officials, of course, argue that workers already have too much leisure. Willard Rockwell, Jr., president of Rockwell Manufacturing, claims "that the four-day week is something to be avoided as long as possible—not only for the immediate effect on our

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economy, but also for the ultimate demoralizing effects on our individual and national character and strength. Over-extended leisure, we firmly believe, dulls the 'cutting edge' of a man's talents, intelligence, and pride of accomplishment."

Union officials, on the other hand, heap scorn on the traditional charge that more leisure brings in its wake more drunkenness and moral decay. "The growth of leisure," says a resolution of the United Auto Workers, "means growing recognition of man as the end purpose of economic activity, for only in his leisure time is the worker truly free to follow his own purposes. . . . With the shortening of the work week, living standards have risen and not fallen; and workers have grown in stature as cultural, intellectual and spiritual beings playing an ever larger and more constructive role in their communities and the nation."

THE EVIDENCE for the union argument, alas, is not quite so conclusive. There is no doubt that the worker benefited greatly not only in economic but also in human terms when his schedule was reduced from ten, twelve and fourteen hours of daily drudgery to only eight. A century ago, certainly, when he was working seventy or eighty hours a week, he had little time to pursue a cultural or political bent, and Karl Marx predicted that once the worker won reasonable hours he would become more radical and more class-conscious.

But the introduction of the forty-eight-hour week and more recently the forty-hour week have proven that Marx and many others were wrong. There is a point at which additional leisure—unless properly utilized—becomes a bane rather than a boon for the workingman. The worker uses his extra time not to study social philosophy—but to play, to escape. He does not become more rebellious but more conformist.

Daniel Bell, former labor editor of *Fortune,* writes that the average worker masks his "to-hell-with-it-all" attitude by "constant evasion of thought about work, the obsessive reveries (often sexual) while on the job, the substitution of the glamour of leisure for the drudgeries of work." It is no accident that in our literature work is so often compared to prison. Writes Aldous Huxley: "Every efficient office, every up-to-date factory is a panoptical prison in which the worker suffers . . . from the consciousness of being inside a machine."

"What are we to expect?" asks Erich Fromm in his *The Sane Society.* "If a man works without genuine relatedness to what he is doing, if he buys and consumes commodities in an abstractified and alienated way, how can he make use of his leisure time in an active and meaningful way? He always remains the passive and alienated consumer."

Living in a society that places psychotic emphasis on consumer-consciousness, the worker succumbs to the values of the marketplace rather than culture or education. In the rubber city of Akron where a six-hour, six-day week has prevailed for some time, fully fifteen or twenty per cent of the rubber workers hold down two jobs. These "moonlighters" either work on a second shift in another rubber factory or as taxi drivers, bellhops, garage attendants, clerks, barbers or butchers. Nationally, more than one of every twenty workers, 3.7 million in all, have second and sometimes third jobs. The shorter week for them does not bring with it more meaningful leisure but only an opportunity to make more money.

If the work week is reduced from forty to thirty hours, will there be less or more moonlighters? The chances are that the number will increase considerably, for the simple fact is that the average worker does not know what to do with his time.

Melvin Maddocks, writing in the *Christian Science Monitor,* pointed out more than a year ago that "the mythical 'average adult' watches television sixteen hours a week, perhaps a third to a half of available leisure time." Our populace spends three times as much each year in buying T.V. and radio sets as on the theater, concerts, opera and books combined. "Television viewing at the saturation level virtually becomes a substitute for living."

This is the salient characteristic of leisure in modern America—it is a "substitute for living," rather than a means of better living. It results not in reading good books, going to concerts, studying sociology or biology in night classes, but in bowling, sports, television, and lurid paperbacks.

The labor movement is thus in a trap, one at least partly of its own making. It can and will eventually win the shorter work week—and it should. But based on its present philosophy it can not help the worker to convert those additional hours to "meaningful experience."

George Meany and most labor leaders still talk of "more" rather than "better." Unmindful of the fundamental changes these past few decades to bigness, centralization and alienation, they seek more wages alone rather than a better utilization of money; more leisure time rather than a better utilization of leisure time. Beguiled by the value patterns of our "free enterprise" economy they assume glibly that if you just keep adding to labor's benefits you will somehow solve all major problems. They continue to live in the past when labor was still struggling for a "living wage" and for time to relax.

Admittedly tens of millions of workers are still in need of a living wage—the two million unorganized agricultural workers, the many millions of white collar, retail and service workers. But most organized workers in the basic industries have passed this stage. The steelworker with his $120 a week-plus or the carpenter with his $159 a week-plus earn a living wage today. What they need now is some guidance on what to do with

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both their money and their time. It is here that the labor movement fails abysmally. It has no program for what to do next.

HOW, THEN, do you make work more palatable? Or leisure more meaningful? The Norwegian labor movement is making a special study of the subject. In Yugoslavia the Titoists argue that workers' councils and self-management of factories and other economic units are the answer. Daniel Bell in the United States suggests something less drastic: that the unions fight to end the management practice of measuring value of labor in terms of efficiency and time study. Under his suggestion we would slow the pace of production somewhat and give the individual worker more operations to perform so as to make work less monotonous.

As one contribution to the discussion I would like to suggest that the first step towards economic humanism should be a reunification of work and education. Under this thesis we would continue the forty-hour-week but devote five, ten or fifteen hours to adult education.

It may be difficult to adjust our social spectacles to this "unrealistic" idea, but experiments along these lines have been going on in Europe for some years. One of the outstanding of these, Boimondau, involves a watch case factory in France. The original owner, Marcel Barbu, decided after France's defeat by Hitler in 1940 to establish a "Community of Work" with a common ethical basis. He paid little heed to the former occupation of the men he recruited for this special venture so long as they agreed to search for a system of management where the "distinction between employer and employee would be abolished." Both he and his new associates understood that common ownership and joint managership of the productive facilities was not enough. They explain their principle in the following words: "We do not start from the plant, from the technical activity of man, but from man himself. . . . In a Community of Work accent is not on *acquiring* together, but on *working* together for a collective and personal fulfillment." In discussing what they meant by personal fulfillment the first thing they listed was education. They vowed that whatever time they could save through improvements in productivity they would devote to educating themselves.

After only a few months the men of Boimondau became the most efficient watch-case makers in France. But they neither shortened their work week nor raised their wages (they were already earning ten to twenty per cent above union rates). Instead they added nine hours a week of education to their job. They continued to be present in the factory forty-eight hours (the prevailing work week in France at that time), but they put in only thirty-nine hours of physical labor. The other nine were spent inside the plant taking courses in engineering, physics, literature, Marxism, Christianity, grammar, dancing, singing and basketball.

In addition the group bought a 235-acre farm and each member and his family spent three ten-day periods each year working on the land. This too was part of the theory of "fulfillment"; no man, they felt, should be entirely divorced from the soil. Considering that the men had a month's vacation, this meant a total work year at the factory of only ten months, all of it designed to utilize more fully the worker's talents and widen his horizons.

OBVIOUSLY, a small experiment such as Boimondau or that of the one hundred other communitarian societies in Europe can not automatically be fitted for broader application. Many other problems come into play when applied to large units. Yet the concept of combining work and education does seem to have universal merit. It can be an effective antidote against the consumption-mania and escapism of our times. It can rescue the individual from manipulation by Madison Avenue and big centralized institutions. It can revive his feeling of social responsibility.

In putting such a plan into practice in the United States we would have to anticipate many difficulties. At Boimondau the participants wanted to combine work and education. They didn't have to be forced to attend classes. In the U.S., with escapism so prevalent, a worker given a choice between a biology class and Red Skelton would choose to go home and listen to Skelton. How then will you get him to stay in the shop to study economics or history or biology? Will you apply compulsion? Obviously no man can learn anything if he doesn't want to.

But this problem is not as insuperable as it seems. The factory of the future might reward a worker not only for what he produces in the way of goods but for what he does to enlarge his own personality. He might be given good marks and poor marks, much like an adolescent, and if this were not incentive enough he might have to be monetarily penalized for poor study and rewarded for good. Gradually, as education and work become part of an integral process and the worker begins once again to understand both work and education in relation to the totality of life, this problem would disappear.

A second difficulty we can anticipate is who would control the education. If it were the state we might have a further intensification of the trends toward conformity. If it were the employer or groups of employers we can be certain that nothing controversial, liberal or radical would be taught. If it were the union leaders exclusively, without any checks and balances, we might also have too restrictive an educational system. The answer, it seems, is to develop a semi-autonomous institution, modelled, for instance, on the

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Danish Folk High Schools, with representatives from the teachers, the rank and file, the unions, perhaps even the employers, guiding policy—but with the teachers given wide latitude in academic matters. This system is in effect now in many union health centers. The unions handle the administrative end of the operation, but the doctors have the final, unchallenged voice in all medical matters. This problem too would be mitigated as the values of society, labor unions, and the rank-and-file workingman make a fundamental turn in the direction of humanism.

Another difficulty that is inherent in this plan is what to do about the small factory or the small economic unit. Yet by combining small units (say by putting together the elevator operators, janitors, carpenters and office girls in a building into one group) or by organizing separate classrooms removed from the place of work and paying "travel time" to them, this problem can also be solved. Indeed, no difficulty need be overpowering once there is a reorientation of our value system.

HISTORY, I think, is completing a circle. In primitive society, under the tribal system, education and work are one and the same. Men learn about the earth, the stars, and their surroundings in the course of hunting, fishing, plowing. Their living standards in this period are very low, but—contrary to the egotistical estimate of our Western society—their social values are very high. None of our present-day societies places such emphasis on brotherhood as the tribal society. No tribesman will permit members of his clan or tribe to starve while there is any food available. He will help his kinsman in this or any other emergency as a matter of course.

As society becomes more complex, however, work and education tend to separate. Specialization begins. Society stratifies into classes and occupations. In our historical epoch, diversification and division of labor have reached their ultimate pinnacle. From this diversification we have achieved the greatest material benefits known to history, but we have paid a price for it. To stimulate "drive" we have over-emphasized individualism and individual initiative in our set of values, as against collective effort and collective concern. We have yet to find a tolerable balance between the two human drives. Every Sunday we espouse Christianity, but on Monday brotherhood flies out the window, particularly in the work shop. There, it is each man for himself and devil take the hindmost. It is efficiency that counts, not humanity.

Our educational "advance" reflects this. As the factory system matured, society found itself in need of rudimentary education. A literate working class was needed to read blueprints, instructions, safety notices on time clocks and so on. Free and compulsory education was won in America not only because of the agitation of the labor parties back in the 1820's but also because a complex society could not exist without it.

In the twentieth century, as the managerial class expands, this need has become still more pronounced. The tendency is for youngsters to go to school for longer periods if they are to make a career for themselves. A generation ago high school was considered adequate for most; now increasingly it becomes college. As Vance Packard points out in *The Status Seekers* you can hardly get a good white collar job any more unless you have a college degree.

Despite the increase in schooling, education seldom continues beyond early adulthood. For the average workingman schooling ends with high school. From that point on until he dies he does little more in any formal way to probe the mysteries of the universe. A generation ago, under the stress of unfavorable economic circumstances, many men educated themselves after leaving school. But this is a phenomenon obviously in decline as the nation enjoys a more propitious economic climate.

The tragedy of this development can not be stated in statistics. Our democracy is changing from a participative one to a manipulative one. We live in our escapist world, while we submit to direction by big politicians, big businessmen, big union leaders. We ourselves don't try to deal with the great problems of the day. We take our politics, if at all, in mild five-minute T.V. speeches around election time. We choose those men who are most "marketable," those who present the best father image, or who can put forth the most time-worn conventional wisdoms. We eschew bad news, we avoid problems. Lured by ten and one-half million dollars in Madison Avenue advertisements and public relations programs, we prefer play to education and consumption to knowledge.

The question of a shorter work-week therefore dovetails into these other and broader social problems. Merely shortening the hours of labor solves only the traditional economic problem of technological unemployment. It doesn't even touch the bigger one of human values. In that sphere it actually aggravates the problem unless more is done.

Certainly union officials ought to fight for a shorter work-week, but they ought not to lose sight of the fact that this is only a minor goal that may have to be reversed tomorrow. If the combination of education and work were to achieve its purpose we might have a situation where men actually demanded more "work" —more time for education, less time for escapism.

I am not suggesting that combining work and education is a total answer to de-humanized society, to the mass-man and organization-man. But it is an important first step.

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Talking with Each Other

by LEO R. WARD

IN OUR county, which includes South Bend and Mishawaka and Notre Dame and has a population of two hundred thousand, a mixture and variety of rabbis, priests and ministers have been talking more or less together once a month for over ten years. People might well ask what we do and what we have achieved, and some of my nicest neighbors still do say, in a cynical tone: "Oh, it's one of those one-religion-as-good-as-another outfits, eh? We're all going to the same place, eh?"

What then do we do? We meet. That is something. And we talk with each other on some assigned common problem set by events or by some new book. We talk with and to each other in an almost friendly way. We don't talk at each other, and we never shout. Probably part of the time we do talk around each other, and each of us must be aware of now and then skirting certain trouble-making and hard-to-settle subjects. We couldn't talk theology, as we are not a group of scholars but for the most part guardians and leaders of parish groups, and we are not prepared for depth studies in theology and philosophy. We really do want to know the other fellow's mind, and we want easy-to-understand answers to our questions.

Do we trust each other and genuinely believe each other? We do and we don't. That all depends. It depends on the man and where and by whom he was educated. It depends on his family background. It depends on the people he has worked with and known. It depends on whether he is widely read and on whether he has ever had training in some kind of social studies.

For instance, we had in our group for a while an Episcopalian who had taught theology and who knew and could formulate clearly and simply the Catholic position on both the deeper and the more practical subjects. We have had some who have been trained in the sociology of religion and have kept up on some of the better books as these appear. With such men it is much easier to get to understandings. But then we are a variety and mixture, and some of us, without the ballast of scholarship or reading, are not so steady and balanced.

We do trust each other, or we almost do, once we have been meeting each other for two or three years. A new man is likely to sit it out for at least one luncheon, and then he begins to thaw out, or he disappears. The difficult thing for any of us, at least at first, is to get beyond the suspicious stage. At any particular moment someone is likely to be thinking that someone else, a fellow of another church, has something up his sleeve and is trying to "get the drop on us."

Let us put the achievement in this regard at a minimum. Let us say we have reached the point of trusting some of the others, sometimes, and a little bit. That would be something, and perhaps more than we did ten years ago. Looking back now, all of us know that when we first met, we stepped cautiously as if on thin ice. We were really and truly afraid of each other. By this time, with the turn-over in clergy assignments and men coming and going, perhaps we have had, all told, a hundred frequenters, and a little hard core that keeps turning up all the time. This means that at least the core like the get-together. Don't expect a lot. This strange Rome cannot be built in a day. Remember, we started from something like absolute zero ten years ago. But certainly some of us have become friends, and I guess heaven knows there is such a thing as hard-won friendship.

IT'S A little victory, perhaps, if any at all. But we can and do talk in the language of "we" and "us." We are not quite so scowlish and standoffish as we used to be. A famous Communist, turned Christian, was described by one member of the group as a mean-looking fellow. "Oh," said another, "he needn't look that way any more." It is hard not to look that way. We were brought up miles apart in sympathies and loyalties, with no trustworthy knowledge of each other. Laymen have something of the same problem, but whatever their religion, laymen are thrown together every day in business and politics, and sometimes in school or in the army. Most clergymen have had little, if any, of that hard-knock training.

In our group we do topple some of the minor walls. Together we discuss books such as Will Herberg's *Protestant-Catholic-Jew,* or Father George A. Tavard's *Catholic Approach,* or Dr. Martin Marty's *The New Shape of American Religion,* or my own *Christian*

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Ethics, or Schweitzer's autobiography (in paperback.) We trouble ourselves with some of the current problems: war, and peace, missiles, censorship, fair campaign practices, etc. We usually don't make any great discoveries relative to the problems or in or through the books, although a fellow never can tell what will pop up. But, in incidentals more than the major points, we learn where the other fellow stands, where he thinks his neighbor stands, and where we ourselves stand. Perhaps sometimes a man sees his own blindness.

When two or three of us chance to meet on the street or in public gatherings we find that we are more than nodding acquaintances. Can it be that we really are friends? Some of us are, beyond any doubt. I don't know exactly why Davie and I, for instance, have hit it off so well, but we have. Our close friendship may have come in part out of an international explosion set off by Harry S. Truman. It was announced late on a Saturday night that the President wanted to send a representative to the Vatican, and the next morning two of our men, including Davie, blew the roof off. That made things awkward. We had to postpone our next session, and we next met on neutral territory, mixed into a larger crowd. A neutral Unitarian clergyman from out of town addressed us on the history of tolerance and intolerance in the United States, and the chairman of the meeting was a Jew.

The chairman was understandably scared and wanted to keep us off the firecracker subject, but a little priest was called on and soon had us all laughing. Then he said: "I think we're beating around the bush —we want to talk about Truman and the Pope!" In the excitement that followed, the man becoming my friend said that he had fought the K.K.K. in Indiana in the twenties, been fired from his pulpit and had had to make his living selling shoes. He shook as he spoke and held on to his chair, and we all held our breath. I think everyone in the room was affected. As the session closed, I thought there must be some neutralizing subjects, and said to this man, "The weather—hasn't it been great! You could play golf in weather like this!"

That did more than promote a friendship. It started an annual golf tournament, Notre Dame offering its course for the day, and ten or twelve of the worst duffers imaginable patronizing the rough for a few hours, and someone treating us to lunch. It wasn't the lunch or the golf at all that went over. It was the fun we had and kept having about golf. We talked about it before, during and after, and the match became a county-wide talkathon. So the only real explosion we ever had in the long run did us more good than harm. We all went home a bit battered from that fracas, but that single round revealed us to each other more than a dozen nice sweet sessions could. And playing golf together turned out to be the surprise package. We discovered that everyone could laugh and that we could all laugh together.

A NEW man coming to us is likely to be looking for skeletons in other people's closets. He knows they are there, having been taught by odds and ends of hearsay and by some disreputable books. His usual good judgment has been laid aside when he has heard things about and against "the enemy." As we meet, he tends to hear something sinister in what anyone says, and he feels affronted if anyone jokes. Why he is that way is a long story pretty much lost in history and psychology. But we know part of the psychology, which is fairly simple and runs like this. When groups live close to each other and yet do not mix and know each other, they are likely to build up bugaboos. The two sides depend on guesswork, and soon form wild subterranean views of each other. They have to do so, since nature abhors a psychological vacuum and will let us fill it in with fears, suspicions and even with hatred. That is just the kind of thing that is always happening between races, and between religions, and nations, and capital and labor, and school and school. It should be expected, and it repeatedly occurs.

The cure for it is to know each other. That may not always be the only medicine needed, but it is always needed. After our group had met for several years, a fortunate question came out of the hat one day: "We are not an action committee, and are not students or scholars. What then do we think we are doing?" Happily, one member knew a line which Cardinal Newman wrote in a letter to a layman early in the 1870's, saying that nothing could be better for the Church than that laymen and priests should get together and try to understand each other "and allow for each other."

That formula continues to make sense to us. The least that dissident groups might do is to get together and try to understand each other and "allow for each other." Merely allowing for, merely tolerating, is like an insult to our common humanity, it is true, but even allowing for the other fellow is difficult. It takes honesty and time and patience: the man who comes in and lays his cards on the table and walks out might better have stayed at home. What we do does require a modicum of good will.

We never even think of worshiping together, but once during Holy Week a rabbi showed us every step of how the orthodox celebrate the Passover, and a few Christian parishes were, that year, the recipients of far better Easter sermons. We say grace at lunch, but I doubt whether we could manage the Our Father together. Of course we could have a moment of silent prayer, and we might be able to say together some words from the Prayer of St. Francis: "Lord, that I may seek to understand rather than to be understood."

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ITALIAN BESTSELLER

The Soul of Sicily

by GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN

IT IS a well-known fact that Italians are not interested in books. Only in Spain and in certain Balkan countries are less books sold per capita than in Italy. The reason for this is not only the number of Italian illiterates, still comparatively high, for the lack of interest in books is quite as noticeable among the middle and upper classes, and even among the intellectuals. Italian publishers consider a book which has sold five thousand copies a success, and this despite the fact that Italy has nearly fifty million inhabitants. Many internationally known Italian writers consider themselves lucky if their books reach a sale of thirty thousand copies in their mother tongue, and yet in other countries the same books often reach much higher figures.

Therefore it is of special interest when a book becomes an outstanding bestseller in Italy. Right now an Italian book has had a success in Italy that few books have ever had and, to make it all the more unusual, this book was written by an author who was completely unknown, who died before the book was published, indeed, who was not a writer at all, but an aristocrat interested in literature purely as a hobby. The author was Prince Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, one of the exclusive set of big Sicilian landowners, and the title of his book is *Il Gattopardo,* which means a sort of leopard, a heraldic animal like the lion or the eagle.

The big landowners in southern Italy have had a certain notoriety since the end of the war, owing to the land reform program, intended to reduce the big estates and create a class of small farmers living on their own land. This whole class has become a sort of scapegoat and is often accused of having survived itself, of being a kind of unfortunate anachronism. It is a fact that many of its representatives do not seem to have discovered yet what the French Revolution meant and consider the Christian Democratic Party, which has brought about the land reform, as a crowd of dangerous subversives.

"The barons," as they are often called, have so far suffered the land reform in silence, hardly venturing from their dark and dusty mansions. But they have never made it a secret that they consider the land reform an unjust and illegal confiscation, and recently they have gathered some satisfaction out of the fact that the land reform seems increasingly to be about a century late, if not two. Even in backward southern Italy it appears that in the industrialized agriculture of our time small farms do not pay, and are eliminated in favor of larger units in all advanced countries.

Now a representative of these feudal lords has broken the self-imposed silence of his class. His voice comes, appropriately enough, from the other side of the grave, and Italy has paid attention as never before. In a short time the book has sold the amazing number of 180,000 copies here, and the sales are still soaring.

IL GATTOPARDO is an autobiography, not of an individual but of a whole Sicilian family, represented by one man, Prince Fabrizio Salina, latifundist. The background of the story is the reunification of Italy one hundred years ago, which was a turning point in its history and has some strange similarities with our time. The style is intentionally old-fashioned, as is the whole conception, which gives the novel a strong flavor of the past. And yet the problems which are dealt with in the book are as burning now as they were then. The atmosphere of the novel is nightmarish in its cultivated powerlessness and bitter pessimism, a pessimism beyond any hope.

With a mixture of pride and disgust, Prince Fabrizio describes from inside and at close quarters the degenerate Bourbons who ruled southern Italy in the last century, vividly describing the frivolities, the decay, the corruption. He deals sarcastically with the determined attempts made from northern Italy to correct these conditions, but which failed miserably, as, according to him, the fascists failed, and the present regime failed, and as the Church has failed.

Fabrizio dwells insistently on the Church, but without resentment. He does not try to make the Church responsible, as so many Italians from the south, desperately in need of a scapegoat, try to do. It is not the Church which has made of southern Italy what it is, he claims, but southern Italy which has made the local Church what it is, and that is, pathetically unable to renew itself, exactly like the human material out of which it is made. The high clergy in southern Italy according to an old tradition comes from northern Italy, but its attempts to improve what is backward and vi-

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cious are as vain as the attempts of all other strangers to introduce reform. The Archbishop's attempts, says the author, were like shots fired at a wall of living cottonwool. The small hole produced by the bullet is immediately closed again by a thousand invisible fibers, and everything remains as it had been before. The only difference was that in his efforts to change things the Archbishop had wasted his strength and made a fool of himself.

The sensuality in southern Italy, sometimes amounting to a kind of sexual obsession, is, according to the author, present everywhere and always, even in the heavy scent of the flowers, the same flowers which in other countries have only a chaste fragrance. The most sensual flowers of all are the orange blossoms, which once inspired Mohammed to make beautiful women the reward for men even after death. It is a sensuality which has a sweet rottenness about it, he goes on, a sensuality which through its very obsessiveness approaches death and decay. Here the author agrees with another Sicilian writer, Vitaliano Brancati, that this sensuousness is something like a desperate compensation, a substitute for the general helplessness. A plunge into sensuality is the easiest way; it is an intoxication; it is the illusion of victory.

"In Sicily," says Prince Fabrizio, "the question is not to act rightly or wrongly. The sin we Sicilians will never forgive is the sin of acting. We are old, very old. . . . To sleep, that is what we want, and we will always hate him who tries to wake us, even if he brings with him the most costly gifts. Everything we do has to do with sleep, even the violence: our sensuality is longing for oblivion; the shots fired in ambushes, the knives in the back are longings for sensuous immobility. . . . What is new attracts us only when it has already died and is unable to create new living impulses. . . . The Sicilians will never really want to improve their conditions of life, for they believe that they are perfect, for their vanity is greater than their misery. And any interference from strangers, or just from people who think freely, disturbs their illusion of perfection, disturbs their self-sufficient waiting for nothing. . . ."

THESE bitter words are said by the Prince to a stranger, who urged him to act and to use his influence in order to improve the conditions of his people. But, the Prince adds, it is impossible to tell other Sicilians this, and if you, a stranger, had said it to me, I would have reacted strongly. . . .

This is the book the Italians have shown such unprecedented interest in. It has been suggested that they are fascinated by a problem which concerns them all and they are behaving like the patient who reads with passion about his own disease. For however great the difference is between highly developed northern Italy and the backward south, the problems of the south are simply a caricature of the problems of the whole country. In addition to this is the fact that so many Italians of the north are worried about the immigrants from the south, arriving in increasing numbers and bringing with them the infectious mentality Prince Fabrizio describes with such eloquence.

Another extraordinary book about Sicily has recently been published in Italy. It is *Inquiry in Palermo,* by Danilo Dolci, the man who has been called the "Gandhi of Italy." Already it has been translated into the principal European languages and has attracted a great deal of attention. In his enthusiastic preface to the English translation Aldous Huxley calls Dolci "a saint of the twentieth century."

In his book, Dolci sees Sicily from an angle exactly opposite to that of *Il Gattopardo*. Dolci is from northern Italy and has consecrated his life to redeeming the most miserable and Mafia-ridden part of Sicily. He and his book have, however, been practically ignored by his countrymen, and particularly by the Sicilians. The embarrassed silence of northern Italy is transformed into downright hostility in southern Italy. Dolci has been tried and imprisoned and hampered in every respect by the local authorities and is fighting a desperate battle against overwhelming odds.

He has, after all, committed the sin which is never forgiven: to act. He is not criticized because he acts strongly, he is criticized simply because he acts. He is considered a stranger, like all the other strangers who have tried to change Sicily and failed. The fact that his approach is new and bold and has never been tried before only disturbs Sicilians the more. It disturbs them that he will not realize his defeat and give up, like those who came before him, but seems only to be stimulated by the difficulties.

Prince Fabrizio Salina shakes his head at Dolci and repeats in a thousand different voices: we are old, very old. . . . It is impossible to make an old sickly man run. . . . To sleep, that is what we want and we will always hate him who tries to wake us, even if he brings with him the most costly gifts. . . . What is new attracts us only when it is already dead and unable to create living impulses. . . . Our vanity is greater than our misery. . . .

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THE SCREEN

ENCROACHING JUNGLE

DESCRIBED as "London's first adult musical," the stage hit "Expresso Bongo" has now been filmed by producer-director Val Guest. Even if by "adult" it means "sexy," "Expresso Bongo" is not, of course, England's first adult movie, and the characterization is in a way a natural outgrowth of the heels portrayed in "Look Back in Anger" and "Room at the Top." It mainly concerns a slick opportunist, a talent agent in London's Soho district, where brash Johnny Jackson is most at home in the night hours with the proprietors and entertainers in the espresso houses, the jazz clubs and burlesque shows in which the chorus girls appear on stage and off garbed in a couple of daisies and a g-string. Laurence Harvey, not quite so angry as he was in "Room at the Top" but equally determined, plays the glib, unscrupulous Johnny to perfection. And he is surrounded by a cast who add considerably to this gaudy picture of a tawdry world: Sylvia Syms as the stripper who is Johnny's temporary girl friend; Cliff Richard as a young, very naive singer and bongo player, Johnny's principal client, who is built up to an Elvis type; Yolande Donlan as a fading American star who latches onto Johnny's rising protégé; Meier Tzelniker as the head of a recording company who knows what side his records are buttered on and isn't averse to dealing with Johnny and his dumb but spectacular "Bongo Herbert."

Producer Guest and scriptwriter Wolf Mankowitz (whose short story was the starting point for the stage musical comedy that now has grown into this flashy movie) also know what side their film is buttered on; and while it has some brilliant satire on fast-buck agents, television and theatrical producers, and popular singers of goo that ranges from love themes to motherhood, the movie also slips beyond the bounds of decency in displaying the wares it is burlesquing. Greatly reminiscent of "Pal Joey," "Expresso Bongo" unfortunately does not have Richard Rodgers' good score; and at times during a couple of overly long and talky scenes, it even forgets it's a musical and a *motion* picture. It does, however, have two very amusing patter songs: "Nausea" and "Nothing Is For Nothing," which are expertly put over by Laurence Harvey and Meier Tzelniker and effectively summarize the film's attitudes and points. But perhaps "Expresso Bongo" is best summarized in a sneer by Mankowitz, who considers it quite a departure from the typical British musical comedy "about nice, happy, sexless people who lead nice, happy, sexless lives." So if you want a new musical movie about unnice, unhappy, sexy people who lead unnice, unhappy, sexy lives, this is your dish of tea.

EVEN BONGO Herbert, after he got wised up in Soho, would have been shocked at the goings-on at the American college displayed in "Tall Story." Although the stage play by Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse was a pretty thin comedy about a college basketball fix and ethics, the movie is even thinner and cornier. It centers on Anthony Perkins as the basketball star and newcomer Jane Fonda (Henry's attractive daughter) as the girl whose purpose in going to college is to grab off a husband. The teachers, well-played by Ray Walston and Marc Connelly, are shoved in the background at this college where such extra-curricular activities as campus sex and athletics are the main issues. Try as they do, the good cast can't work up the stale jokes into much entertainment and may even make students wonder if all the publicity about crowded colleges and stiff courses isn't exaggerated. No one, of course, will take producer-director Joshua Logan's picture seriously, but will anyone even take it in jest?

IT IS often difficult to tell just what film makers have in mind, especially when they come up with such an obviously sensational movie as "Private Property." It would be too easy to label the movie indecent and let it go at that, since its makers think their picture is the American counterpart of France's New Wave. But most of the New Wave films, even though they seem to have a single-track mind, usually have a point; "Private Property," in spite of its pretentious production and handsome photography, seems to have no other purpose than to show in detail the machinations of two unsavory young men bent on a seduction. After a few introductory scenes displaying the two fellows (played by Corey Allen and Warren Oates) as beatniks from the lower depths, the two find their prey, an attractive blonde (Kate Manx) whose husband is often absent from their Los Angeles home. Step-by-step, director-writer Leslie Stevens shows Allen softening his easy quarry for Oates, his less skillful pal, who flunks out when the set-up is completed. Needless to say, this is pretty lurid stuff, and Stevens treats his unpleasant subject matter as if there were much more to it than meets the eye. There isn't, nor can it be classed as entertainment.

NO DOUBT Tennessee Williams, who has great compassion for fellow-sufferers in this vale of tears, means for us to sympathize with the central character played by Marlon Brando in "The Fugitive Kind," but this movie made from Williams' "Orpheus Descending" is such a mixture of styles and confusion of themes that nothing comes through very clearly. The main trouble with the film, I suspect, is that it

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was not very well planned to start with. Perhaps the script that Williams wrote with Meade Roberts was too long, or perhaps Director Sidney Lumet allowed the exposed footage to run too long; in any case, "The Fugitive Kind" as it is now edited never adds up as a whole. This is too bad, as it has a fine cast and some of its individual scenes succeed in being extremely moving.

Although Brando seems to be walking through the role of the guitar-playing ex-beatnik who's determined to lead a new life, he succeeds in making the man quite appealing, and his efforts to help the lonely wife (Anna Magnani) of the vicious store owner (Victor Jory) and the unloved and unwanted nymphomaniac (Joanne Woodward) hold our interest. But we never believe this is happening; the characters are poorly motivated; and the villainous, inhuman Southerners shown here are caricatures, not people. "The Fugitive Kind" is at its best in the scenes between Magnani and Brando, but the setting and parable are too far out—not with the fascinating nightmarish quality of "Suddenly, Last Summer," but in a never-never manner that never even connects its compassion with reality.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THE STAGE

THE MINISTERS WITHOUT PORTFOLIO

MR. GORE VIDAL has declared himself to be, as playwright, "a sport, whose only serious interest is the subversion of a society which bores and appalls" him. However true this may be, it can be reported that "The Best Man," his markedly successful *comédie à clef* of contemporary politics, is, like his earlier "Visit to a Small Planet," the work of an intellectual dandy, resourceful and suavely insolent, notably void of any distinguished impulse or effect. In an election year, Mr. Vidal has stewed up a *bouillabaisse* of some rather raunchy fish heads—full of saffron and spice and nothing quite nice—which will decidedly nourish the buffet crowd. His pepper is never less than hot, and a good thing too, for it stimulates his players to that sanguine volatility the American actor will always call up when he is summoned to the demonstration of *real life*. "The Best Man" is a credit then, very much, to this lamentable theatrical moment, and one would be niggardly to deny its arrowing and supple wit.

Yet I am not at all certain how much it contributes to the subversion of nations, much less their enlightenment, and I was moved to reflect on the curious esteem writers such as Mr. Gore Vidal enjoy among us. Is it a tribute to their audacity? But surely the heresies of Mr. Vidal, say, or his coeval Miss Marya Mannes, are hardly as autonomously convulsive as the *Schadenfreude* of—to choose at random—the Europeans Gênet and Beckett; rarely so obsessive as those of Mr. John Osborne; not so exhilarating, even, as Miss Mary McCarthy's authentic intellectual sharpshooting. Are they not, rather, those social "gestures of complaint" that Mr. Harry Golden called Miss Mannes' strictures: "indices for what class we belong to, and where we come from, and what we do, and whether or not we want to be invited again"? And is not their relation to intelligence, as such, peripheral? Indeed, might not intelligence be said to begin directly such polite and unexceptionable lamentations are recognized, assessed for their general truth, and disposed in the order of their relevance? The wonder is that the middle-class American community persists in thinking so elementary a posture of the intellectual life singular, rewards it with attention, sponsors and endures its insistent iteration of the obvious with pathological relish.

I have sometimes thought of these figures who live by such energies as the traditional Ministers Without Portfolio—councillors and hostages to a world they never made (though this rarely gives them pause) and —which of us would deny it?—too often wanting in awe before its complex manifestations. But I must no longer invoke the paranoic *they:* the moment has come to employ the ambivalent *we*. For am I not now, and have I not always been, myself a card-carrying Minister without Portfolio: does not the security with which I call upon those honorific terms *culture* and *society*—preferably entwined with *our*—testify amply to my good standing in Our masonic hierarchy? And what a hierarchy it is!—with Pontifex Maximus himself, Our Liberal Imagination, presiding over the Capitoline on Morningside Heights; with our London branch safely under the august paws of Old Possum; with our Permanent Executive Committees permanently executive in all the funds, foundations and faculties: all of us with all our O.K. opinions at all the O.K. times—who's in, who's out—vigilantly preparing the consummation of that celebrated Minister-without-Portfolio-Rallying-Cry: *Everybody in his place*—AND ME ON TOP!

It is, again, one of the winning idiosyncrasies of the Minister without Portfolio that he so often, with headstrong and unswerving dedication, uniquely misses the point. Consider Mr. Vidal, whose free-wheeling ironies on the political theme in "The Best Man" deny him an ultimate glimpse of that last irony and sobering intuition of all power: that it *will* be exercised, and must, and that the humanism of imperfection is a fragile shield before an assault. Or what, more dangerously, of that other possibility which has always tantalized the imagination, and upon which all of us act, practically—Mr. Vidal, who has just declared for Congress, not least—that power might be, in some undreamed-of way,

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a good? It is these lacunae, partially, that deny "The Best Man's" most arresting figure—the Nixon prototype—more than a circumstantial reality, neglect his singularity as a phenomenon—one unique response to a moment of stasis in social evolution—and propose him only, though ironically, as a moral whipping-boy. Irony may be a defense, as Mr. Marvin Mudrick subtly observed in his study of Jane Austen, but it must also be a discovery.

Or take Mr. Vidal on the significant relation of public to private: he professes indifference to Miss Y's laments about her analyst, or to whether Mrs. X is resolving her marital disputes with Mr. Z, and so on: rather, he asserts, it is "society"—ministerial word again!—that involves *him*. But surely the state of "society" is the sum of individual states, and surely the genuine horror of history is that it turns so often on a bad digestion, a childhood snub, a sexual obsession: "the course of self-interest," as Mrs. Sybille Bedford wrote in *A Legacy*, "seen as a beeline only at the moment." How brilliantly Schiller marked this in "Mary Stuart," when Elizabeth, wavering, was recalled to venomous purpose by her remembrance of the insolent "Bastard!" flung at her by Mary. And what are the Shakespearean Historical Plays but a monument to the discovery of that point at which personal destiny intersects with history, time and the state. The private dossiers of the figures in "The Best Man" are rife with local color—birth control, promiscuity, Lolita-ism, homosexuality in the Aleutians: literally something for *everybody*—but how little of it comes into anything like conviction.

I have perhaps driven a literate entertainment into pretensions quite beyond its scope, and no one should fail of gratitude to Mr. Vidal for much of his engaging buckshot, as well as for a clever lively production, softened by Miss Leora Dana's patrician coolness. But one last cavil, and I shall minister along, with or without portfolio. How are we to account for the savage righteousness, the almost indecent glee, exhibited by New York audiences whenever a mildly liberal sentiment is trotted out for approbation? At several of the more water-logged passages in "The Best Man," I indicated unconsciously—by occasional perhaps rather too generous sighs—my moral impatience, and directly, as if by radar, vigilant A.D.A. eyes were riveted on me: *get that man,* was in the air, *get him!* and indeed, I felt quite like the victim of Miss Shirley Jackson's *The Lottery*. Then I remembered how, earlier this season, at that grade-school political reader "The Gang's All Here," only the peremptory rise of the curtain had prevented my being compelled to accept an invitation to brawl in the alley. How "liberal" are we Ministers without Portfolio, anyhow? I shall have to take this up with old Pontifex Maximus, who will doubtless make an honorific pronouncement. *(At the Morosco.)*

RICHARD HAYES.

PROLOGUE TO A PASSION PLAY

This is a play, and therefore
the real world is not here.
The world of the play is entered
with the dimming of the lights,
with imagination's leap
from the sullen, selfish flesh.
The world of the play is never
entered all the way:
the eyes tire, the chair
insists upon our flesh,
the body drags us back.
Yet on our return
we are not as we were:
even the flesh consents
The world of the play was better.
Slowly we almost ask
Was it, perhaps, more real?

This is the Passion, and therefore
the real world is not here.
The world of the Passion is entered
when certainties grow cold,
when all we thought most mattered
is a pattern of unmeaning,
when something more is needed
than lover, home, and car.
The world of the Passion is never
entered all the way.
The lively flesh will not
embrace its immolation:
it stares instead and mutters
How it must hurt! I'm sorry
for Him: sorry but I
really don't think I could.
Although we sometimes follow
part of the way, and stand
between the mob and the victim
in a passion of unrest.
Yet when it is over,
back in the car, at the desk,
even the flesh rejoices
to have seen what it has seen,
and says, *His way is better.*
Flesh and spirit affirm
Only that world is real.

JOSEPH P. CLANCY.

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MASS MEDIA FOR MASS MAN

DURING a recent "challenge" program on the state of television, Leo Rosten put the problem in a nutshell. "The trouble with the mass media," he is quoted as saying, "is the masses." I did not hear the program so I do not know how Mr. Rosten meant the statement to be taken. But I wish I had said it first, for it gets to the heart of the matter.

The image of the listener predominant in the T.V. industry is that of the Mass Man, that face in the lonely crowd which stands only for a statistic, a certain income, an average set of prejudices, fears, predilections, and Pavlovian responses, and above all for a single unit in a fearsome power structure which has proved itself capable not only of deposing kings but of creating gods.

It is understandable that so many are out to reach Mass Man. After all, he controls a unit of the nation's total economic, social and political power. No one who has enough Mass Men on his side need fear the Public —the polite name for any congregation of Mass Men; moreover, we should not forget that Mass Men *en bloc* have the power to make best sellers in the nation's supermarkets and on its car-lots, to turn indifferent crooners into million-dollar properties, and even to elect Presidents of the United States. No wonder, then, that the Mass Man is courted so carefully in every advertising medium, including T.V. Like the monarchs of old, his word is law in all the image industries; when he says he is not amused, heads may roll from Sunset Boulevard to Madison Avenue.

How does one reach Mass Man? Certainly not by appealing to his intellect, for Mass Man does not have any intellect: he is a creature devoid of all specifically human qualities except one and that is a crushing will that must constantly be directed. How does one direct Mass Man's will? If one is expert in such things, one strikes for the prejudices, the fears, the predilections; one learns to count on the Pavlovian responses. That is how it is done.

Looked at in a certain way, Mass Man may seem to be the glory of democracy. I think not. For Mass Man is not truly a man at all; he is not a person. He is, rather, a single unit in a malleable glob. He lacks those qualities which make the individual in any human grouping ultimately autonomous and essentially mysterious. As a person, a real man is capable of thought and decision and above all of love. Mass Man, on the contrary, lives and moves and has his being in the mindless crowd, waving a dollar, a letter or a protest to the sponsor, or a ballot as symbols of his power. To please him, ideas, art, culture, religion and, above all, opinion must be made as bland as possible, for his statistical taste levels off at mediocrity and his constant penchant is for what he is thought to regard as the tried and true, however tiresome or spurious that might be.

"The trouble with the mass media is the masses." Of course the Mass Man to whom most of our T.V. programming is directed is almost the antithesis of the image of men proclaimed in the nation's basic political documents and in our religious tradition as well. No one has written more percipiently of the dangers of thinking of human beings in such terms as Pope Pius XII did in his treatment of democracy. The late pontiff made a sharp distinction between the idea expressed in the phrase "We, the People"—a union made up of individual persons—and the spurious concept of democratic masses of humanity composed of mindless statistical units.

Yet one of our problems as persons, it seems to me, is that we are coming more and more to be treated as Mass Men. We seemingly welcome such treatment from politicians, advertisers, entertainers and communications experts of all sorts. Not only do we go along with the mediocrity they hand out to us; we go so far as to wreak a kind of vengeance on anyone who dares to challenge it.

Let a shocking idea be expressed on television, an abhorrent opinion or a prejudice different from those shared by the Mass be voiced, and some manipulator has his chapter of Mass Men ready to send in their protesting letters to threaten the sponsor if the case is repeated. Even people who theoretically despise the Mass Man notion of governance have been known to take advantage of it when their institutional interests, favorite causes or cherished convictions seemed to be threatened. In how many controversies have the lords of television been confronted not by a reasoned response to some attack but by threats that the protesting Mass Man represents x number of units in the great mass, controlling x number of dollars that will be diverted from the sponsor's product if anything like this happens again? Enough certainly to make the television industry the privately grumbling but publicly obsequious slave of Mass Man.

The problem cuts both ways. It is true that the communications industries treat us as Mass Men. But when we act like Mass Men and hurl Mass Man threats every time the networks veer from what we consider the straight and narrow, we have no reason to complain about how we are treated. If they are going to stop dealing with us as if we were Mass Men, we are first going to have to stop acting as if we are.

JOHN COGLEY.

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Disapproval with Compassion

THE LONELINESS OF THE LONG-DISTANCE RUNNER. By Alan Sillitoe. Knopf. $3.50.

By MAX COSMAN

ANY lingering notion that an English writer of fiction today must deal with the pudency of the parsonage or the tittle-tattle of the tea table will be dispelled by Alan Sillitoe. He is as free of the namby-pamby and the genteel as any of the characters he introduced in *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* and now adds to in *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner.*

In general, what a crew of primitives! The Welfare State may have given them the opportunity to earn a living and at last they do have food enough, finery, and, of course, the telly. For all too many of them, however, it has not altered such patterns of behavior as outbreaks of violence, bouts of boozing, a readiness to lie, cheat, appropriate whatever can be had, and more revelatory still, contempt for anything that does not satisfy stomach or sex organ.

And yet, such is Mr. Sillitoe's interest in his fellow man and such his skill in compelling attention, that ignoble, or subnormal as his Nottinghamites are, they call forth compassion even in the midst of disapproval.

The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner is Mr. Sillitoe's first book of short stories, its title-piece his main bid for honors. Long, but not too long for its mingled resentment and elation, it may be read either as a documentary of a Borstal (reform school) boy's unwillingness to benefit by correction or as an extended illustration of the Sillitoean theme that every human being has a right to dignity, express it contumaciously as he will.

Both readings have ample justification. The narrator, a teenager sent up for sufficient cause—he last broke into a baker's office and made off with the cash box—becomes his institution's contender for the Cup in a coming cross-country race. On the day of the event he deliberately rejects victory in plain sight of the spectators, among whom, as he well knows, is his sponsor the governor. His reason, and Mr. Sillitoe's too, judging from one of those comments which identify author with character, is that some honesty, some lonely inner integrity that is his, does not permit him to do anything which the upholders of society, "the In-laws and Potbellies," want him to do.

Trick this out, as you please, with ideas of the necessary cunning and rebelliousness of the Outsider; it is still as sorry a notion as that which makes a schoolboy think he is exemplifying Emersonian self-reliance when he disregards everyone but himself.

It is not the only example of Mr. Sillitoe's ambivalent approach to order and orderers. He comes close to being irresponsible if not reprehensible when he rants, in "The Decline and Fall of Frankie Buller," against the attempts of asylum doctors to tame an over-grown moron's jungle mind. "And then I wanted power in me," he has his surrogate say, "to tear down those white-smocked mad interferers with Frankie's coal-forest world, wanted to wipe out their hate and presumption." If this isn't an inversion of sense, what is?

But when he drops his adolescent rationalization of anarchism and comes to grips with his métier, graphic story-telling, Mr. Sillitoe has a contribution to make. He knows his characters in a lived-with way and he has the additional authenticity of unsuppressed expression. Consequently, he crystallizes a good deal of adult experience in narratives like "The Fishing-Boat Picture," "The Match," and "The Disgrace of Jim Scarfedale." As for renditions of young fry, always a test for a writer's mettle, "On Saturday Afternoon" and "Noah's Ark" give us the adventures of a new kind of Huck Finn, a slummy English Huck, but an indubitable Huck nevertheless.

Taking the whole of Mr. Sillitoe's success into consideration — his *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* won the Author's Club prize for the most promising first novel of 1958—one does not find it hard to predict a future for him. What is more, it will be a notable one, especially if he gets past his savages in teddy-boy outfits to those humane and thought-conscious members of his chosen working-class who were recently brought into prominence in Walter Allen's recent novel *Threescore and Ten.*

A Central Issue of Our Time

PHILOSOPHY IN THE MASS AGE. By George P. Grant. Hill and Wang. $3.

By MICHAEL NOVAK

PHILOSOPHY in the Mass Age is an unusual book; written as addresses for a general radio audience, its language is simple while the issue it tackles is the most central of our day. It is aimed precisely at the inmost nerve. Dr. Grant, who heads the department of Philosophy at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, defines the issue as the inability of either the ancient natural-law morality or the modern morality of action upon history to express the moral vision latent in our present world. For the natural-law morality, says Mr. Grant, teaches men to accept the given world and to be reconciled to it, while the other lays hands on history and dares to fight with it. On the other hand, natural-law morality sets limits, categorically, to certain actions—such as, say, the judicial condemnation of the innocent. The morality of progress *in feeling* sets such limits, but intellectually cannot justify any limit save "the good of the greatest number" or "progress" itself. Nazism

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has shown up the weaknesses of the secular humanist intelligence, as the Enlightenment showed up the weaknesses of natural-law intelligence.

In the first chapter, Dr. Grant describes the current mass society of North America, where conformity characterizes life and freedom eludes those who had such dreams of it. In a second, he compares the outlook of pre- with post-Enlightenment man: the discrimination marked by a changed attitude toward history. Due to the working out of a Judaeo-Christian idea, Europe alone of all world civilizations conceived the ardent desire of "doing something about" history, of making history bow to man's inner freedom. In a third chapter, Dr. Grant tries to describe the forcefulness of the ancient natural-law morality, the most universal code, he notes, the world has ever achieved. In a fourth, he describes what went on in the minds of the great men of the Enlightenment who tried to destroy this natural-law morality and the hold of religion, even while owing their ardor to the Judaeo-Christian conviction of the importance of history.

In a fifth essay, he deals remarkably and wisely with the philosophic spirit of Karl Marx, the most clear and forceful enunciator of the history-shaping humanism of modern man. He notes that Marx is carrying the modern ideal to the East with a success no other force has ever achieved. Next, he notes the obverse fact of our century: the rejection of Marx by the Western civilization that produced him. He believes that the Western tradition of personal freedom is too deep, even in commercialized peoples, to accept Marx's too-total worship of progress. But then he asks: on what *grounds* does Western man limit the worship of action upon history? *Is* there a limit? Is there anywhere a categorical No? What is there to stop us from doing anything we choose?

The question is searching, and in a chapter on North American morality (a liberal Protestant morality full of the idealism of history-making as salvation, not merely a materialist pragmatism) he returns to it. What limit to expediency does such a morality set? Is there *anywhere* a moral limit that can be intellectually defended?

Finally, in a chapter on "Law, Freedom, and Progress," Dr. Grant brings together the theoretical issues he has been formulating, and suggests the complications their resolution involves. He has a predilection for Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* and for Hegel's *Philosophy of Right,* but he is calling for a present renewal of philosophy to achieve a justification for freedom, progress, and a doctrine of limits.

At one point, Dr. Grant notes a principal tragedy of Western civilization: the clericals have gone one way, the anti-clericals another. Those who are well-studied in the modern persuasion do not know the ancient, and surely vice versa. Thus the issue he raises has scarcely been touched. But here Dr. Grant too shows weaknesses. He misses the point of St. Augustine's paradox about an interiorized law being not slavery but freedom, while he appreciates Kant's metaphor of the self-legislated law that is at least its analogy.

But above all, he overlooks one essential point in any discussion of natural law (a point natural-law protagonists also constantly miss): the revolution which Aquinas worked in the entire conception. This revolution, it is true, was soon stifled by the advent of nominalism and a horribly decadent logicism, and was lost sight of in the narrowness of the Counter-Reformation. Its originality was precisely the rescuing of the focal point of natural law from the "innate eternal laws" of Plato, and the placing of the focus—with all the risk this entails —in the deep hunger of the individual, personal intelligence for full growth to free, interiorized consciousness. The painstaking studies of Dom Odin Lottin in medieval moral theory have made this crucial shift clear, and at least a few men, like Bernard Lonergan, are now exploiting its riches.

The problem Dr. Grant sets is the crucial challenge of a Christian Humanism, and the Molinist-Banezian failure to handle it is the intellectual scandal that destroyed the Catholic Renaissance. As Dr. Grant notes in a footnote, the Catholic Church is in a different position from all other ecclesiastical bodies because it does not take flight in a biblicism denying philosophy but systematically encourages reason. Thus it maintains the prospect of a dynamic restatement. The restatement is long overdue, but if it comes our seven centuries of horrid philosophy shall have been worth it.

Topical Nightmare

THE MAGIC CHRISTIAN. By Terry Southern. Random House. $3.

by EDWIN KENNEBECK

IN TERRY Southern's earlier novel, *Flash and Filigree,* there was a television quiz show called "What's My Disease?" In *The Magic Christian* the hero, a cheerful billionaire named Guy Grand, puts on a television soap-opera in the middle of which he has the leading actress turn to the camera and say, "Anyone who would allow this slobbering pomp and drivel in his home has less sense and taste than the beasts of the field!" Grand also manufactures gigantic automobiles which are so huge, so—Guy might even say — "massive" that they can't quite get around the Manhattan corners, and make *quite* a traffic problem.

Of course, Guy has his own problems, for his little pranks are expensive, and many of the episodes in his story end with some such remark as "You can bet it cost him a pretty to keep clear in the end." Not only that, but people take to calling him "Eccentric" and "Crackpot." But according to Mr. Southern, he is still going on, setting up little stores, one at a time, where things are sold at tremendous discounts. At least, a belief seems to persist that these marvelous bonanzas can still be found somewhere —"they say it accounts for the strange searching haste which can be seen in the faces, and especially

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the eyes, of people in the cities, every evening . . ."

Thus Terry Southern, with his vision of Things As They Might Be, adds to our small list of satiric novels and short stories that create what might be called topical nightmare. Our popular culture engenders works of this sort from time to time but does not seem to nourish them, especially in the form of prose fiction. James Purdy and Calder Willingham have done similar things. Mr. Willingham's collection of short pieces called *The Gates of Hell* contained several chilling sketches: one told of a wife standing by her psychopathic husband in a caricatured attitude of "nobility" despite her lover's equally wrong-headed urgings that she leave him: and an essay called "What Is Rape?" explained, "Rape is brutish. It is extremely brutish. No civilized person should contemplate the possibility of taking it up . . ." William Gaddis's frighteningly ambitious novel *The Recognitions* was spiced with weird mutations of religious fervor ("Fr. Eulalio, a thriving lunatic of eighty-six who was castigating himself for unchristian pride at having all the vowels in his name"); of newspaper news ("Man makes own death chair, 25,000 volts. 'Ashamed of world,' kills self") of radio and painting and science and nearly everything else.

These works have a somewhat Nathanael West-ern flavor and they manifest, in varying degrees, the imaginative and technical influence of the master, Evelyn Waugh. They form a delicious genre for those who like savage debunking within the limits of real intelligence. But the popular temperament, being touchy, defensive, and narrow, cannot relax enough to enjoy this kind of satire. We don't like our soft pieties to be sharply challenged: we prefer the obvious, sanctimonious shock of the quiz-show contestant's confession of cheating, and the subsequent acts of contrition, made in public. Even blasphemy seems to misfire in our world; whereas true blasphemy corroborates faith, the irreverent sounds that we hear only make us uneasy, as if *we* were the

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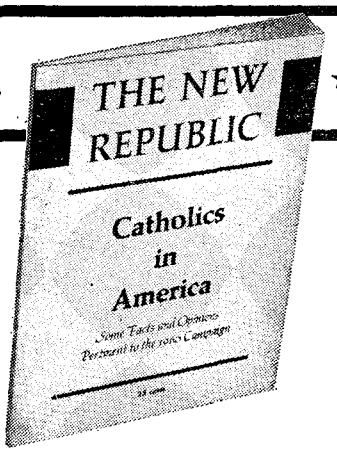

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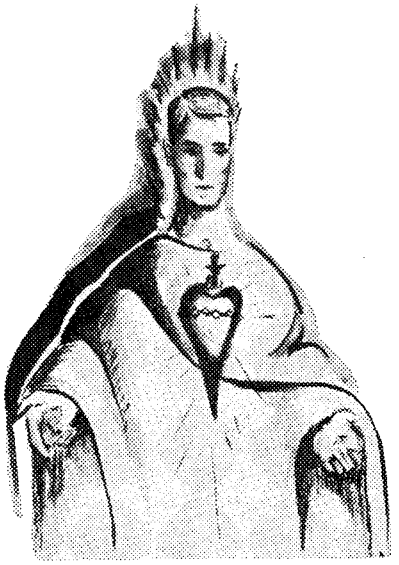

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object. It is true the Vladimir Nabokov, currently popular, belongs to his genre: his little Lolita would doubtless enjoy a drive through the park with Mr. Southern's Guy Grand. But her story's success as a best-seller probably cannot be attributed to its nightmarish topicality.

It isn't only our lack of receptivity that holds this type of satire back, however. Works of this kind require a rare, grisly spirit of fun which seems to exist too often in isolation, not accompanied intimately enough with other story-telling powers—plotting, characterization, description, building of *form*. Nabokov does have these powers, and so does Waugh. Whereas Waugh's fine, firm stiletto usually penetrates neatly into its targets, the one that Mr. Southern uses (and this is true of most of the others who try it) must sometimes bend, probe clumsily about, slip and slide, before finding the vein or tendon that it is aiming for.

Mr. Southern's scalpelings aren't always as "clean" as they might be. Thus, while most of Guy Grand's exploits are lively and amusing—adding a sinister knife-wielding sequence to the movie "Mrs. Miniver," for example—every now and then the billionaire does things that indicate he is No Better Than the Rest of Us, alas, in spite of his riches. Much of the time, however, Guy is simply great, as when he takes tea with his dear old maiden aunts. We have nightmares of our own, true enough, but Mr. Southern's can be a lot of fun.

The Film Writer

AGEE ON FILM, Volume Two. By James Agee. McDowell, Obolensky. $7.50.

By GERALD WEALES

THE FIRST volume of *Agee on Film*, a collection of James Agee's criticism from the *Nation* and *Time*, was received happily by those who knew the man's meticulous and bemused fascination with the screen and in pleased surprise by those who suspected that no film critic could be serious without being pompous. The second volume, a collection of five film scripts, is not likely to stir up so wide an audience as the first did, but to anyone who really cares about the movies the new volume is valuable in its own right. Of the five scripts, three have been made into movies—"The African Queen," which was written with John Huston, who directed it; "The Night of the Hunter," which Charles Laughton directed; and "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky," one-half of a two.part film, "Face to Face." The other two are "Noa Noa," the story of Gauguin, and "The Blue Hotel," like "Bride," an adaptation of a Stephen Crane story.

The only piece of film writing by Agee that is conspicuously missing from the volume is the narration that he did for "The Quiet One," Sidney Meyer's short film about a disturbed child at Wiltwyck School, and it may have been correctly left out, because the five printed scripts are not simply accompaniment, but are attempts to present visual-aural blueprints for complete films. It is ironic and a little sad that the small body of Agee's film work should consist of adaptations (from Crane, C. S. Forester, Davis Grubb), when Agee as critic longed to see the movies free themselves from their literary dependence, and that one of the movies shot from an Agee script, "The Night of the Hunter," should have smacked so much of the self-conscious artiness that the critic in him disliked.

There are relatively few published film scripts. The reason for this is the obvious difficulties that such scripts present for the reader. For one thing, the script writer's necessary insertion of the kind of shot (distance, angle, placement of figures on the screen) interrupts the movement (in a literary sense) of the film as read, much as stage directions slow the reader of a published play; in the case of the film, however, since the viewer's (the camera's) position is likely to change with each line or with no lines at all, the sense of disjointedness is much stronger. A second

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problem is that readers sometimes find it difficult to visualize a scene, to see the screen and the characters on it in relation to one another and their background, particularly if the scripter says simply "Long shot—over the children — Ben Harper's Ford."

One of the values of a collection of scripts is that familiarity quickly overcomes the first difficulty, accustoming the reader to the breaks. One of the pleasures of Agee as a script writer is that the novelist in him can make clear the effect that he hopes to get from a particular shot, can add the look, feel, meaning of a scene to the simple words of the trade.

"Noa Noa," of all the scripts in the book, can probably tell us most about Agee as a film writer. His presentation of Gauguin is a strange mixture of toughness and sentimentality, which is characteristic of much of Agee's work in all genres; his attitude toward Gauguin as an artist mixes respect for the kind of pained dedication that drove Gauguin away from conventional society and a lingering romantic idea of what the artist must be. There is a scene in which a pseudo-artist toasts Gauguin for having deserted family, friends, everything for his *art;* Gauguin accepts the toast, takes a mouth full of wine and spits it into the young man's face. The scene, in its way, is as falsely romantic as the toast is. Often, say in a scene between Gauguin and Tehura, Agee makes the personality of each character and the interaction immediate and vivid; just as often, particularly with Mette ("a strong, noble, disciplined woman") he falls back on a kind of labeling which might be useful to an actor, but which is likely to annoy the reader.

Easily the best things in the script are the attempts to evoke purely visual scenes—the suggestions for cutting the funeral of an old Tahitian king or the fishing sequence—or the visual-symbolic, the five seconds of visuals—"flowers, foliage, fruit, portions of faces and bodies of men, women and children; and the most voluptuous of Gauguin's paintings of that period"—that he suggests to cover the first sexual joining of Gauguin and Tehura.

Although "Noa Noa" and "The Blue Hotel" are interesting as examples of potential films, the other scripts are particularly fascinating in the ways in which they differ from the films that came out of them.

I could go on to trace the changes, to linger over the *why* of new scenes and of excisions, to wonder why lines were occasionally taken from one character's mouth and put into another's (incidentally a book that printed the finished film script, the shooting script, and a script-like description of the actual movie of a first-rate film would be a useful addition to the literature of movie-making), but I have gone on long enough to indicate that the new *Agee on Film* should be attractive not simply to students of film, but to anyone who really looks at the screen once he gets past the box-office.

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The Commonweal Approach

OF ALL THE EFFORTS that have been made to summarize this magazine's point of view, perhaps the thumbnail description that comes the closest to the truth remains the statement that The Commonweal represents "not a movement but an attitude."

That attitude is a Catholic attitude, and The Commonweal is generally referred to as a Catholic publication, although it is not, to use the term people apply to diocesan papers and magazines published by religious communities, an "official" Catholic publication. Rather, The Commonweal is, quite simply, a magazine published by men who are themselves Catholic and who endeavor to express a point of view on temporal matters in conformity with their religous principles. . . .

Since the editors of this magazine are laymen, its primary concern is with the temporal order, which is the specific province of the layman. In the light of their religious beliefs, the editors see the temporal order as being directly related to the spiritual, and their day-to-day judgments reflect this conviction.

Add to this the further fact that contributors to The Commonweal include many of the world's ablest Catholic writers, and it is not hard to see what distinguishes this magazine from comparable "secular" journals and why the magazine is generally thought of as Catholic. But there is nothing more "officially" Catholic about The Commonweal than this, and the editors have always gone to some lengths to make this fact quite clear. . . .

There is no secret about the fact that The Commonweal frequently represents a minority point of view—or at least a point of view quite different from that found in many diocesan papers and Catholic magazines. For example, the editors were —and are—unable to share the enthusiasm of most American Catholic publications for Generalissimo Franco. In Father Coughlin's era The Commonweal saw his *Social Justice* as intolerant and totalitarian in spirit, and said so. More recently, while some "official" Catholic publications heaped praise on Senator McCarthy and scorn upon his critics, the editors of this magazine viewed his "crusade" in a context of national fear and self-doubt and felt it had little to do with any rational means of dealing with the Communist threat.

That our opinions on such public questions drew criticisms and disagreement from other Catholics did not surprise us. . . . There is nothing extraordinary about the fact that Catholics frequently disagree on specific questions of the day. Indeed, the only extraordinary thing would be if this were not the case. But what is disturbing is the way some Catholics try to elevate personal judgments on passing events or political figures into dogmas of orthodoxy which all must hold if they are not to be labeled "pseudo" or "so-called" Catholics.

—from the 35th Anniversary issue

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